A

METHOD

Concerning the

Relief and **Employment**

Of the

POOR:

.nbly Offer'd to the Conſidera-
ion of the KING and both Hou-
ſes of PARLIAMENT in the
following Tract, (taken out of
Sir *Joſiah Childs* Book, Intitled
A Diſcourſe about Trade) By a well-
wiſher of his *Country*.

N the Diſcourſe of this Subject, I ſhall firſt aſſert ſome Particulars, which I think are agreed by common Conſent, and thence take occaſion to proceed to what ɔre doubtful.

'hat our Poor in *England* have always been a moſt ſad and wretched condition, ſome

Famiſhed for want of Bread, others ſtarved with Cold and Nakedneſs, and many whole Families in all the out Parts of Cities and great Towns, commonly remain in a languiſhing, naſty and uſeleſs Condition, Uncomfortable to themſelves, and unprofitable to the Kingdom, this is confeſſed and lamented by all Men.

2. That the *Children* of our *Poor* bred up in *Beggery* and *Lazineſs*, do by that means become not only of *unhealthy Bodies*, and more then Ordinary ſubject to many loathſome Diſeaſes, whereof very many die in their tender Age, and if any of them do arrive to years and ſtrength, they are, by their idle habits contracted in their Youth, rendred for ever after indiſpoſed to Labour, and ſerve only to ſtock the *Kingdom* with *Thieves* and *Beggars*.

3. That if all our impotent *Poor* were provided for, and thoſe of both Sexes, and all Ages that can do Work of any kind, employed, it would redound ſome Hundreds of Thouſands of Pounds *per Annum* to the publick Advantage.

4. That it is our Duty to GOD and Nature ſo to Provide for, and Employ the Poor.

5. That by ſo doing one of the great Sins (for which this Land ought to Mourn) would be removed.

6. That our fore-Fathers had pious Intentions towards this good Work, as appears by the many Statutes made by them to this purpoſe.

7. That

7. That there are Places in the World, wherein the *Poor* are ſo provided for, and employed, as in *Holland*, *Hamborough*, *New-England* and others, and as I am informed now in the *City* of *Paris*.

Thus far we all agree: The firſt Queſtion then that naturally occurs is,

Queſtion, *How comes it to paſs that in* England *we do not, nor ever did comfortably Maintain and Employ our Poor?*

The common Anſwers to this Queſtion are, two.

1. *That our Laws to this purpoſe are as good as any in the World, but we fail in the execution.*

2. *That formerly in the days of our Pious Anceſtors the work was done, but now Charity is deceaſed, and that is the reaſon we ſee the Poor ſo neglected as now they are.*

In both which Anſwers (I humbly conceive) the Effect is miſtaken for the Cauſe: For though it cannot be denied, but there hath been, and is a great failure in the Execution of thoſe *Statutes* which relate to the *Poor*; yet I ſay, the *Cauſe of that failure, hath been occaſioned by defect of the Laws themſelves.*

For otherwiſe, what is the reaſon that in our late times of the Confuſion and Alteration, wherein almoſt every Party in the Nation, at one time or other, took their turn at the Helm, and all had that Compaſs (thoſe Laws) to Stear by, and yet none of them could, or ever did, conduct the *Poor* into a

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Harbour of ſecurity to them, and profit to the Kingdom, i. e. *none ſufficiently maintained the Impotent, and employed the Indigent amongſt us*: And if this was never done in any Age, nor by any ſort of Men whatſoever in this *Kingdom*, who had the uſe of thoſe Laws now in force, it ſeems to me a very ſtrong Argument that it never could, nor ever will be done by thoſe Laws, and that conſequently the defect lies in the Laws themſelves, not in the Men, *i. e.* thoſe that ſhould put them in Execution

As to the ſecond Anſwer to the aforeſaid Queſtion, wherein *want of Charity* is aſſigned for another cauſe why the *Poor* are now ſo much neglected, I think it is a *ſcandalous ungrounded accuſation* of our *Contemporaries*; for moſt that I converſe with, are not ſo much troubled to part with their Money, as how to place it, that it may do good, and not hurt to the Kingdom: For, *If they give to the Beggars in the Streets, or at their Doors, they fear they may do hurt by* encouraging that Lazy unprofitable kind of Life; and *if they give more then their Proportions in their reſpective Pariſhes, that* (they ſay) *is but giving to the Rich*, for the *Poor* are not ſet on Work thereby, nor have the more given them; but only their *Rich* Neighbours pay the leſs. And for what was given in *Churches* to the *Viſited Poor*, and to ſuch as were *impoveriſhed by the Fire*; we have heard of ſo many and great Abuſes of that kind of *Charity*, that moſt men are under

ſad

ſad Diſcouragements in Relation thereunto.

I write not this to divert any Man from Works of Charity of any kind: *He that gives to any in Want does well, but he that gives to Employ and Educate the Poor, ſo as to render them uſeful to the Kingdom, in my judgement does better.*

And here by the way, not to leave men at a loſs how to diſpoſe of what GOD ſhall incline their Hearts to give for the Benefit of the *Poor*, I think it not impertinent to propoſe the *Hoſpitals* of the *City* and *Poor Labouring People that have many Children*, and make a hard ſhift to ſuſtain them by their Induſtry, whereof there are multitudes in the out Parts of this *City*, *as the beſt Objects of Charity at preſent.*

But to return to my purpoſe, *viz.* to prove that the want of *Charity* likewiſe that is now, and always hath been in relation to the *Poor*, *proceeds from a defect in our Laws.* Ask any Charitable minded Man, as he goes along the Streets of *London*, viewing the *Poor*, viz, *Boys, Girles, Men and Women* of all Ages, and many in good Health, *&c.* why he and others do not take care for the ſetting thoſe poor Creatures to Work? Will he not readily anſwer, that he wiſheth heartily it could be done, though it coſt him ſome part of his Eſtate, but he is but one Man, and can do nothing towards it, giving them Mony, as hath been

been ſaid, being but to bring them into a liking and continuance in that way.

The ſecond Queſtion then is,

Queſtion 2. *Wherein lyes the defect of our preſent Laws relating to the Poor?*

I anſwer, that there may be many, but I ſhall here take notice of one only, which I think to be Fundamental, and which until altered, the *Poor* in *England* can never be well provided for, or Employed; and that when the ſaid Fundamental Error is well amended, it is almoſt impoſſible they ſhould lack either Work or Maintainance.

The ſaid radical Error I eſteem to be the leaving it to the Care of every Pariſh to maintain their own Poor only; upon which follows the ſhifting off, ſending or whiping back the poor Wanderers to the Place of their Birth, or laſt Abode; the Practice whereof I have ſeen many Years in *London*, to ſignify as much as ever it will, which is juſt nothing of Good to the Kingdom in general, or the *Poor* thereof, though it be ſometimes by accident to ſome of them a Puniſhment without effect; I ſay without effect, becauſe it reforms not the Party, nor diſpoſeth the minds of others to Obedience, which are the true ends of all Puniſhment.

As for inſtance, *a poor idle Perſon*, that will not Work, or that no Body will employ in the Country, comes up to *London*, *to ſet up the Trade of Begging*, ſuch a perſon probably may

Begg

Begg up and down the Streets ſeven Years, it may be ſeven and twenty, before any body aſketh why ſhe doth ſo, and if at length ſhe hath the ill hap in ſome Pariſh, to meet with a more Vigilant *Beadle* then one of twenty of them are, all he does is but to lead her the length of five or ſix Houſes into another Pariſh, and then concludes, as his *Maſters* the *Pariſhioners* do, that he hath done the part of a moſt diligent Officer: But ſuppoſe he ſhould yet go further to the end of his Line, which is the end of the Law; and the perfect Execution of his Office; that is, ſuppoſe he ſhould carry this poor wretch to a *Juſtice* of the Peace, and he ſhould order the *Delinquent* to be *Whipt* and ſent from *Pariſh* to *Pariſh*, to the place of her *Birth* or laſt *Abode*, which not one *Juſtice* of twenty (through Pitty or other cauſe) will do; even this is a great charge upon the Country, and yet the buſineſs of the Nation it ſelf wholly undone: for no ſooner doth the *Delinquent* arrive at the place aſſign'd, but for ſhame or Idleneſs, ſhe preſently deſerts it, and wanders directly back, or ſome other way, hoping for better Fortune, whilſt the *Pariſh* to which ſhe is ſent, knowing her a Lazy and perhaps a worſe qualitied perſon is as willing to be rid of her, as ſhe is to be gone from thence.

If it be here retorted upon me, that by my own confeſſion, much of this miſchief happens by the non, or ill Execution of the Laws, I ſay,

ſay, better Execution then you have ſeen you muſt not expect ; and *there was never a good Law made that was not well executed, the fault of the Law cauſing a failure of execution*, it being natural to all men to uſe the remedy next at hand, and reſt ſatisfied with ſhifting the Evil from their own Doors ; which in regard they can ſo eaſily do, by threatning or thruſting a *poor Body* out of the verge of their own *Pariſh*, it is unreaſonable and vain to hope that ever it will be otherwiſe.

For the Laws againſt Inmates, and empowering the Pariſhioners to take Security before they ſuffer any poor Perſon to inhabit amongſt them ; it may be they were prudent conſtitutions at the times they were made (and before *England* was a place of Trade) and may be ſo ſtill in ſome Countries, but I am ſure in *Cities* and great *Towns* of *Trade* they are altogether improper, and contrary to the Practice of other *Cities* and *Trading Towns abroad.* The Riches of a *City*, as of a *Nation*, conſiſting in the multitude of *Inhabitants*; and if ſo, *you muſt allow Inmates, or have a City of Cottages.* And if a right courſe be taken for the Suſtentation of the *Poor*, and ſetting them on Work, you need invent no Stratagems to keep them out, but rather to bring them in. For *Thereſort of Poor to a City or Nation well managed, is in effect, the conflux of Riches to that City or Nation* ; and therefore the ſubtil *Dutch* receive, and relieve, or em-

employ all that come to them, not enquiring what *Nation*, much leſs what *Pariſh* they are of.

Queſtion 3. The third Queſtion: *If the defect be in our Laws, how ſhall we find a remedy that may be rational and conſiſtent?*

This I confeſs is a hard and difficult queſtion, it is one of the *Ardua Regni*, and may very well deſerve the moſt deliberate conſideration of our wiſeſt *Counſellors*. And if A WHOLE SESSION OF PARLIAMENT WERE EMPLOYED ON THIS SINGULAR CONCERN, I think it would be time ſpent as much to the glory of GOD and good of this *Nation*, as in any thing that noble and worthy *Patriots* of their Country can be engaged in: But ſeeing I have adventured thus far, I ſhall humbly proceed to offer ſome General Propoſals that have a tendency towards the effecting this great Work, which being ſeriouſly thought of and debated by a COMMITTE, may be capable of ſuch meliorations as may render them in a great meaſure effectual to the *Kingdom* in general, although at preſent, to prevent that Common Objection, that great Mutations are dangerous; I ſhall only propoſe them to be experimented in theſe parts of the *Kingdom*, which are the Vitals of our body politick, which being once made ſound, the care of the reſt will not be difficult.

Propoſition, 1. Firſt then I propoſe, *That the City*

City of London *and* Weſtminſter, *Burrough of* Southwark, *and all other places within the uſual Lines of Communication*, deſcribed within the weekly Bills of Mortality, *may by Act of Parliament be aſſociated into one Province or line of Communication for relief of the Poor.*

2. That there be one Aſſembly of men (and ſuch as they ſhall from time to time appoint and deputiſe) entruſted with the care for, and treaſure of all the Poor within the ſaid Pale or Line of Communication.

3. *That the ſaid Aſſembly be incorporated by Act of* Parliament, with perpetual Succeſſion by the name of *Fathers of the* Poor, or ſome other honourable and ſignificant Title.

4. *That all Conſtables, Church-wardens Overſeers, or other Officers in all* Pariſhes, within the ſaid Line, *be ſubordinate and accomptable to the ſaid Fathers of the* Poor, *and their Deputies for, and in all things relating to the* Poor.

5. *That the ſaid Fathers of the poor may have liberty, to Aſſes and receive into their common Treaſury*, for relief of their Poor, *ſo much Money from every Pariſh as they yearly paid to that purpoſe any of the three Years preceeding this Conſtitution, and to compel the* Payment *thereof, but not of more.*

6. That the ſaid *Fathers of the* Poor, and their Deputies, may have very large and ſufficient Power in all things relating to the Poor, and particularly to have and receive the charitable benevolence of all Perſons once every

every *Sunday* in every Pariſh-Church, and in any other place, and at any other time or times which they ſhall think fit.

7. That the ſaid Fathers of the Poor, and ſuch as they ſhall authorize, may have Power to purchaſe Lands, erect and endow Work-houſes, Hoſpitals and Houſes of Correction, and to exerciſe all other Powers relating to the Poor, that any number of *Juſtices* of the *Peace* now may do, in their *Quarter Seſſions* or otherwiſe.

8. *That the ſaid Fathers of the* Poor *may have* Power *to ſend ſuch* Poor *beyond the* Seas *as they ſhall think fit into his Majeſties* Plantations, *taking Security for their comfortable Maintainance during their* Service, *and for their freedom afterwards.*

9. *That the ſaid Fathers of the* Poor *may have* Power *to erect petty* Banks *and* Lumbards for the benefit of the Poor, if they ſhall find it convenient, and alſo to receive the one half of what is paid at all the Doors of *Play-Houſes*, and have the *Patent* for *Farthings*, and to do whatever elſe his *Majeſty* and the *Parliament* ſhall think fit to recommend to them, or leave to their Diſcretion.

10. *That the Treaſure that ſhall be collected for this purpoſe be accounted ſacred, and that it be* Fellony to miſapply, conceal, lend or convert it to any other uſe or purpoſe whatſoever.

11. *That there be no* Oaths, *or other* Teſts *im-*

impoſed upon the ſaid Fathers *of the Poor, at their Admiſſion, to bar out Nonconformiſts,* amongſt whom there will be found ſome excellent Inſtruments for this good Work, and ſuch as will conſtantly attend it, for if they be kept out, the People will be cold in their Charity, and in their hopes of the ſucceſs.

12. That the ſaid *Fathers* of the *Poor* may conſtantly wear ſome honourable Meddal, ſuch as the *King* and *Parliament ſhall deviſe,* beſides the *green Staff* which is now uſed in *London* to ſuch like purpoſe (but upon extraordinary dayes only) *to denote their Authority and Office,* at all times, and in all places, after the manner of the Habits in *Spain,* or rather, as have all the *Familiars* of the *Inquiſition* in moſt *Romiſh* Countries, with admirable effect, tho to a wicked purpoſe; the conſequence whereof will be, that the ſaid *Fathers* of the *Poor,* being Numerous, and diſperſt by their Habitations and Buſineſs into moſt parts of their *Province,* will readily ſee any neglects of Officers, and as eaſily redreſs them; the *Meddal* which they wear about them, being a ſufficient Warrant to command Obedience from all *Pariſh Officers* wherever they come, although their Perſons be not known there.

13. That the ſaid *Fathers* of the *Poor* may have Liberty to admit into their Society and all *Powers* and *Priviledges* equal with them, any Perſons that are willing to ſerve GOD, their King and Conntry in this pi-

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ous and publick Work, the Perſons deſiring to be ſo admitted, paying at their admiſſion 100 *l.* or more into the Poors Treaſury, as a demonſtration of the Sincerity of their Intentions to labour in and cultivate this moſt Religious Vineyard. This I only offer becauſe the number of the ſaid *Fathers* of the *Poor* hereafter mentioned, may be thought rather too few then too many.

14. That the ſaid Fathers of the *Poor*, beſides the Authority now exerciſed by *Juſtices* of the *Peace*, may have ſome leſs limited Powers given them, in relation to the puniſhment of their own, and Pariſh Officers by pecuniary mulcts for the Poors benefit in caſe of neglect, *and otherwiſe as his* Majeſty *and the* Parliament *ſhall think fit.*

15. That the ſaid Fathers of the *Poor* may have freedom to ſet the *Poor* on Work about whatſoever Manufacture they think fit, with a *Non obſtante* to all Patents that have been or ſhall be granted to any private perſon or Perſons for the ſole Manufacture of any Commodity, the want of which priviledge, I have been told, was a prejudice to the Work-houſe at *Clerkenwell*, in the late deſign of ſetting their *Poor Children* about making of *Hangings.*

16. That all Vacancies by reaſon of Death of any of the ſaid *Fathers* of the *Poor* be perpetually ſupplyed by Election of the Survivors.

Queſt. 4. The fourth Queſtion is, *who ſhall*

be

be the perſons entruſted with ſo great a Work, and ſuch exceſs of Power?

This is a Queſtion likewiſe of ſome difficulty, and the more in regard of our preſent Differences in *Religion*, but I ſhall anſwer it as well as I can.

In general I ſay, *They muſt be ſuch as the people muſt have ample ſatisfaction in, or elſe the whole Deſign will be loſt* : For if the univerſality of the people be not ſatisfied with the perſons, they will never part with their Money; but if they be well ſatisfied therein, they will be miraculouſly charitable.

Queſt. 5. This begets a fifth Queſtion, viz. *What ſort of men the people will be moſt ſatisfied in?*

I anſwer, I think *in none ſo well as ſuch only as a common Hall of the Livery-men of* London *ſhall make choice of*, it being evident by the experience of many Ages, that the ſeveral *Corporations* in *London* are the beſt *Adminiſtrators* of what is left to *charitable Uſes*, that have ever been in this *Kingdom*, which is manifeſt in the regular, juſt and prudent management of the *Hoſpitals of London*, and was wiſely obſerved by *Doctor-Collet Dean of St. Pauls* that prudent *Eccleſiaſtick*, when he left the Government of that *School*, and other great Revenues aſſigned by him for charitable Uſes, unto the diſpoſition of the *Mercers Company*.

Object. But here it way be Objected, That

Country

Country-Gentlemen, who have Power in places of their Reſidences, and pay out of their large Eſtates conſiderable ſums towards the Maintenance of their Poor within the aforelimited precincts, may be juſtly Offended if they likewiſe have not a ſhare in the diſtribution of what ſhall be raiſed to that purpoſe.

Anſw. I anſwer the force of this Objection may be much taken off if the *City* be obliged to chooſe but a certain number out of the *City*, as ſuppoſe ſeventy for *London*, ten out of *Southwark* for that *Burrough*, twenty for *Weſtminſter*, this would beſt ſatisfie the people, and I think do the Work: But if it be thought too much for the *City* to have the choice of any more then their own ſeventy, the *Juſtices of the Peace* in their *Quarter-Seſſions* may nominate and appoint their own number of perſons to aſſiſt for their reſpective Juriſdictions, and ſo to ſupply the vacancy in caſe of Death, *&c.* But all muſt be conjunctive, but one *Body Politick*, or the work will never be done.

Queſt. 6. The ſixth Queſtion is, *What will be the advantage to the Kingdom in general, and to the poor in particular, that will accrue by ſuch a Society of men, more than is enjoyed by the Laws at preſent?*

I anſwer, Innumerable and unſpeakable are the Benefits to this Kingdom that will ariſe from the Conſultations and Debates of ſuch a wiſe and honeſt *Council*, who being men ſo elected

elected as aforesaid, will certainly conscionably study and labour to discharge their trust in this Service of GOD, their *King* and *Country*.

1st. The *Poor*, of what quality soever, as soon as they are met with, will be immediatly relieved or set on Work where they are found, without hurrying them from place to place, and torturing their Bodies to no purpose.

2. Charitable-minded men, will know certainly where to dispose of their Charity, so as it may be employed to right purposes.

3. House-keepers will be freed from the intolerable Incumbrance of Beggars at their Doors.

4. The Plantations will be regularly supplyed with Servants, and those that are sent thither well provided for.

5. The said Assembly will doubtless appoint some of their own Members to visit and relieve such as are Sick, as often as there shall be occasion, together with poor Labouring Families both in *City* and *Suburbs*.

6. *Poor Children will be instructed in Learning and Arts*, and thereby rendred serviceable to their Country, and many other worthy Acts done for publick good by the joint deliberation of so many prudent and pious Men, assisted with such a Power and Purse, more then can be fore-seen or expressed by a private Person.

Quest.

Queſt. 7. The ſeventh Queſtion may be, *What ſhall all the Poor of theſe Cities and Countries, being very numerous, be employed about!*

This queſtion will be anſwer'd beſt by the ſaid Aſſembly themſelves when they have met and conſulted together, who cannot be preſumed deficient of Invention to ſet all the *Poor* on Work, eſpecially ſince they may eaſily have admirable Preſidents from the Practice of *Holland* in this particular, and have already very good ones of their own, in the Orders of their *Hoſpitals* of *Chriſt-Church* and *Bridewell* in *London*; the *Girles* may be employed in mending the Clothes of the *Aged*, in *Spinning*, *Carding*, and other *Linnen Manufactures*, and many in *Sowing Linnen* for the *Exchange*, or any *Houſe-keeper* that will put out Linnen to the *Matrons* that have the Government of them.

The *Boys* in *picking Okam*, *making Pins*, *raſping Wood*, *making Hangings*, or any other *Manufacture* of any kind, which whether it turns to preſent profit or not, is not much material, the great Buſineſs of the Nation being firſt but to keep the *Poor*, from *Begging* and *Starving*, and enuring ſuch as are able to Labour and Diſcipline, that they may be hereafter uſeful Members to the Kingdom: But to conclude, I ſay the wiſeſt Man living, ſolitarily cannot propoſe or imagine ſuch excellent ways and methods as will be invented by the united Wiſdom of ſo grave an *Aſſembly*.

The ſitting of the ſaid *Aſſembly* I humbly conceive, ought to be, *De die in Diem*; the *Quorum* not more then thirteen; whether they ſhall Yearly, Monthly or Weekly chooſe a *Preſident*, how they ſhall diſtribute themſelves into the ſeveral quarters of the *Communication*, what *Treaſurers* and other *Officers* to employ, and where, and how many, will beſt be determined by themſelves, and that without difficulty, becauſe many that will probably be Members of the ſaid *Aſſembly*, have already had large experience of the Government of the *Hoſpitals* of *London*: The manner of Election of the ſaid *Fathers of the Poor*, I humbly ſuppoſe, cannot poſſibly be better contrived, then after the ſame way which the *Eaſt-India-Company* chooſe their *Committee*, which will prevent the Confuſion, Irregularity and Incertitude that may attend the Election of Voices, or holding up of Hands; eſpecially becauſe the Perſons to be Elected at one time will be very many; the ſaid manner Propoſed is, every *Elector*, *viz.* every *Livery-Man* to bring to *Guild-Hall* at the appointed day for Elections, a liſt of the whole number of Perſons, ſuch as he thinks fit that are to be Elected, and deliver the ſame openly unto ſuch Perſons as the *Lord Mayor*, *Aldermen*, and *Common-Council-Men* ſhall appoint to make the Scrutiny; which Perſons ſo entruſted, with the ſaid Scrutiny, ſeven, or ten days after, as ſhall be thought fit,

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atanother *Common Hall* may declare who are the Perſons Elected by the Majority of Votes.

If it be here Objected to the whole purpoſe of this Treatiſe, that this work may as well be done in diſtinct *Pariſhes*, if all *Pariſhes* were obliged to Build *Work-Houſes*, and Employ their *Poor* therein; as *Dorcheſter* and ſome others have done with good ſucceſs.

I anſwer, that ſuch attempts have been made in many places to my knowledge, with very good intents and ſtrenuous Endeavours, but all that ever I heard of, proved vain & ineffectual (as I fear will that of *Clerken-Well*) except that ſingle Inſtance of the Town of *Dorcheſter*, which yet ſignifies nothing in relation to the Kingdom in general beſides all other places cannot do the like, nor doth the Town of *Dorcheſter* entertain any but their own *Poor* only, and *Whip* away all others; whereas that which I deſign is to propoſe ſuch a Foundation, as ſhall be large, wiſe, honeſt and rich enough to maintain & employ all *Poor* that come within the Pale of their *Communication*, without enquiring where they were Born, or laſt Inhabited: Which I dare affirm with Humility, that nothing but a *National*, or at leaſt ſuch a *Provincial Purſe* can ſo well do, nor any perſons in this *Kingdom*, but ſuch only as ſhall be prickt out by Popular Election for the reaſon before alledged, *viz.* That in my Opinion *three fourths* at leaſt of the *Stock* muſt iſſue from the *Charity* of the *people*; as I doubt

not but it will to a greater proportion, if they be ſatisfied in the *Managers* thereof; But if otherwiſe, not the fortieth; I might ſay not the hundreth part.

I propoſe the Majority of the ſaid *Fathers of the Poor* to be *Citizens (though I am none my ſelf)* becauſe I think a great ſhare of the Money to be employed, muſt and will come from them, if ever the Work be well done, as alſo, becauſe their Habitations are neareſt the Center of their Buſineſs, and they beſt acquainted with all affairs of this Nature, by their Experience in the Government of the *Hoſpitals*.

Earneſtly to deſire and endeavour that the *Poor* of *England* ſhould be better provided for and employed, is a Work that was much ſtudied by my deceaſed *Father*, and therefore though I be as ready to confeſs, as any ſhall be to charge me with Diſability to propoſe a *Model* of Laws for this great Affair, yet I hope the more Ingenuous will pardon me for endeavouring to give aim towards it, ſince it is ſo much my duty, which in this particular I ſhall be careful to perform (though I may be too remiſs in others) as ſhall appear by MORE VISIBLE AND APPARENT DEMONSTRATIONS, if ever this deſign, or any other (that is like to effect what is deſired) ſucceed.

J. C.

sihT

This following,

Sir MATTHEW HALE,

Late Lord Chief Justice, *Writ* (*with much more*) *about the* Poor *of this Nation*, viz.

In his *Discourse Touching Provision for the Poor.*

"WE have very ſevere Laws againſt "*Theft*, poſſibly more ſevere than moſt "other Nations, yea, and than the Offence "ſimply conſidered deſerves; and there is "ſo little to be ſaid in defence of the ſeve-"rity of the Law herein, but the multitude "of the Offenders, and the deſign of the Law "rather to terrifie then puniſh: *ut ne eus in "omnes pœna in paucos*: But it is moſt apparent "that the Law is fruſtrated of its Deſign "therein; for altho more ſuffer at one Seſſi-"ons at *Newgate* for Stealing, and Breaking up "Houſes, and Picking of Pockets, and ſuch "other Larcenaries, than ſuffer in ſome other "Countries for all Offences in three Years, yet "the Goals are never the emptier: Neceſſity "and Poverty and want of a due Proviſion for "the Employment of Indigent perſons, and "the cuſtom of a looſe and Idle Life, daily "ſupply with advantage, the number of thoſe "who are taken off by the Sentence of the "Law: And doubtleſs, as the multitude of "*Poor* and neceſſitous, and uneducated Per-

ſons

" ſons increaſe, the multitude of *Malefactors*
" will increaſe, notwithſtanding the Exam-
" ples of Severity.

" So that upon the whole account the Pru-
" dence of Prevention, as it is more Chriſtian
" ſo it will be more effectual than the Pru-
" dence of Remedy. The prevention of *Po-*
" *verty*, Idleneſs, and a looſe and diſorderly
" Education, even of *Poor Children*, would do
" more good in this Kingdom, than all the
" *Gibbet* Caterizations, and Whipping Poſts
" and Goals in this Kingdom, and would
" render theſe kind of Diſciplines leſs neceſ-
" ſary and leſs frequent. *Pref.*

" In that State that things are, our Popu-
" louſneſs which ſhould be a bleſſing to the
" Kingdom, becomes the Burden of it, by
" breeding up whole Families, and Succesful
" Generations, in a meer Trade of Idleneſs,
" Thieving, Begging, and a Barbarous kind of
" Life, which muſt in time prodigiouſly in-
" creaſe and overgrow the whole face of the
" Kingdom, and eat out the heart of it, unleſs
" care be taken to prevent it. *p.* 32.

He Concludes his Book thus, *viz.*

" That it would be a Work of great Hu-
" manity (to relieve and imploy the *Poor*)
" and ſuch as we owe to thoſe of our own
" Nature as we are men. The wiſe GOD
" did tell his ancient People that the *Poor*
" ſhould be always among them; 1*ſt.* to exerciſe
" their Liberality and Charity in ſupporting
" the wants of ſome by the abundance of o-

thers

" thers. And 2*d* to Exercise their Discreti-
" on and Industry to think of and set on foot
" such means as might put them in a Course of
" honest Impl yment, and encourage them in
" it: They that are Rich are Stewards of their
" Wea th, and they that are wise are Stewards
" of their Wisdom unto the Great MASTER
" of the Family of Heaven & Earth to whom
" they must give an account of both, and one
(I am sure of the best accounts they can give
" of both is, to imploy them in the Refor-
" mation and Relief of those that want both
" or either.

" 2. A work that as well becomes a Christi-
" an as any: Christianity commending Charity
" as one of the Principal Vertues, and indeed
" the ill Provision for the *Poor* in *England* is one
" of the greatest Reproaches to us in relation
" to our Christian Profession.

" The want of a due Provision for *Educati-*
" *on* and Relief of the *Poor* in the way of In-
" dustry, is that which fills the *Goals* with *Ma-*
" *lefactors*, and fills the *Kingdom* with *Idle* and
" unprofitable persons, that consumes the
" Stock of the *Kingdom* without improving it,
" and that will daily encrease even to a De-
" solation in time. And this Error in the first
" Concoction is never remediable but by *Gib-*
" *bits* and *Whipping*. But there must be a sound
" Prudent and resolved Method for an Indu-
" strious Education of the *Poor*, and that will
" give better remedy against these Corrup-
" tions than any Penalties can.

FINIS.